

IOWA DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH

IT TAKES A TEAM!

THE DEPARTMENT TEAM

- Represented each of the department's divisions.
- Divisions had a lead member and a second-in-command. (Priority that one or the other had to be present).
- Met about every three weeks for about 3 hours at a time.
- Made a group decision about the prioritization of evidence.
- Each member had homework!
- We had to be comfortable with making it up as we went along.

TEAM MEMBER QUALIFICATIONS

- In the beginning we looked for the following skills:
 - Communication
 - Analytical
 - Writing
 - Organizational Skills
- When we put future teams together:
 - People with broad knowledge base
 - Subject matter experts would be available

A TYPICAL MEETING

- Met where we could use a projector and laptop.
- Provided food.
- Began with a check in and identification of questions. (Good time to vent and share stories of things going well.)
- Reviewed evidence for criteria using a coversheet. (All of these were stored on a common drive.)
- Prioritized evidence or identified additional sources of information.
- Looked at clarification and intent of the next set of criteria to be addressed.
- Checked in again to see if there were any questions – and that all questions identified at the beginning had been addressed.

DIVISION TEAMS

- Each division had its own team to look at evidence.
- Teams looked for evidence for all 11 components of the standards (e.g., oral health's fluoridation program was used as evidence in the environmental health component).
- Some department team members were overwhelmed by the volume of evidence they received in their divisions.

PRIORITIZING EVIDENCE

- Department team members submitted their division's best evidence.
- Every division thought their evidence was best.
- Department team sorted through all the evidence submitted from the divisions.
- Department team picked the top 5 pieces of evidence to present for the department.

CHANGES ALONG THE WAY

- Originally it was set up so that majority would rule in the event of a decision – it very quickly moved to needing to be unanimous.
- We came up with a common naming convention for evidence (e.g., HB 3a-L Tob JQ).
- We added an “editor” to the team – someone to edit the writing for consistency. The site visitors appreciated the common feel to our evidence.

ROLE OF THE SME

(SUBJECT MATTER EXPERT)

- Called in to address specific areas where general knowledge didn't seem to be sufficient (key in the areas of environmental health, emergency response, and prevent epidemics).
- Needed to provide general orientation to the SME about the process the team was using before SME's arrival at the meeting (otherwise it would slow down the process).
- SMEs didn't liked to be questioned about their documentation but that's the job of the accreditation team.

TEAM COORDINATOR

- Set the schedule
- Facilitated meetings
- Answered questions
- Was the cheerleader for the process

LESSONS LEARNED

- Offered a unique opportunity for team members to learn more about what goes on across the department.
- It was stressful – you have to make it fun.
- The process confirmed what we did well and what needed to be improved.
- We took for granted that we could prove what we do and how we do it (i.e., having the documentation).